

REDDISH

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.



Medical Officer's Report




FOR THE YEAR 1898.



STOCKPORT :

"ADVERTISER" AND "ECHO" OFFICES, KING STREET EAST.



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To the Chairman and members of the Reddish District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

THE Report which I have now the honour of submitting to you—on the Health of the Reddish District during the year 1898—shows an Annual Death Rate lower than that of any previous year of which I have information.

Population—The number of inhabited houses was found by direct observation in June, 1898, to be as follows :

	Occupied Houses.		Empty Houses.		Estimated Population.
South Reddish	665	...	43	...	3098
Mid Reddish.....	774	...	9	...	3606
North Reddish	320	...	1	...	1490
	<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>
	1759		53		8194

All calculations in this report are based on an estimated population of 8100.

Deaths and Births.—The number of deaths registered was 106—58 males and 48 females.

The number of births was 214—108 males and 106 females.

Inquests.—Inquests were held in five cases, and verdicts returned as follows :—Natural causes 3, hanging (suicide) 1, fractured skull (accident) 1.

Uncertified Deaths—Five deaths were uncertified by any registered medical practitioners—viz., Bronchitis 2, Cancer 2, Natural Causes (Coroner's certificate) 1.

The following tabulated returns give a comprehensive record of mortality during 1898.

Table I. gives the number of deaths at the age periods specified.

District.	Total.	Under 1 year	1 year and under 5.	5 years & under 15.	15 years & under 25.	25 & under 65.	65 and over.
South Reddish	33	10	2	2	2	13	4
Mid Reddish...	59	14	10	2	3	20	10
North Reddish	14	3	2	—	2	6	1

Table II. shows the number of deaths resulting from the causes specified :—

Disease.	South Reddish.		Mid Reddish.		North Reddish.	
	Under 5 years.	Five years & over.	Under 5 years.	Five years & over.	Under 5 years.	Five years & over.
Scarlet Fever ..	...	...	...	...	..	...
Diphtheria .....	...	...	...	...	...	...
Typhoid Fever...	...	1	...	...	...	1
Measles.....	...	...	1	...	...	...
Whooping Cough	...	...	1	...	...	...
Diarrhœa, &c....	4	...	9	...	...	...
Phthisis .. ...	...	1	...	5	..	1
Bronchitis, &c ...	2	4	7	4	...	3
Heart Disease ...	...	5	...	11	...	...
Influenza .....	...	3	1	...	...	...
Inanition & Premature Birth.	..	...	2	...	2	...
Maramus & Tabes Mesenterica ..	2	...	1	...	1	...
Injuries .....	...	...	...	2	...	...
All other causes..	4	7	3	13	2	4

The various mortality rates for the whole district are shewn for the last three years in Table III :

Year.	Total Birth Rate.	Total Death Rate.	Zymotic.	Phthisis	Respiratory.	Infantile.
1896	30·15	15·13	2·76	1·58	2·10	131·00
1897	32·05	21·41	6·79	·77	3·71	196·00
1898	26·66	13·08	2·22	·86	2·46	121·02

The above tables reveal several important points. For instance—the deaths of children under 5 years of age are in proportion much larger in Mid Reddish than in either of the other districts, and these deaths are chiefly from Bronchitis and Diarrhœa. The same was the case in 1897. The total number of deaths is proportionately larger in Mid than in North or South Reddish, as was the case in 1897.

The Zymotic Death Rate is small, ·49 per 1000, if we exclude deaths from Diarrhœa, which as I have pointed out in previous reports, is a disease which may to a considerable extent be prevented.

As was the case in 1897 the mortality from Diarrhœa was confined to Mid and South Reddish.

Infectious Diseases.—The infectious diseases certified, or of which information was otherwise obtained (measles) were as under. Table IV.:

DISEASE.	South Reddish.		Mid Reddish.		North Reddish.	
	Under 5 years.	5 years and over.	Under 5 years.	5 years and over.	Under 5 years.	5 years and over.
Typhoid Fever...	...	2	...	5	1	7
Continued Fever.	1	...
Erysipelas	6	...	...
Diphtheria	2	...	4
Scarlet Fever	1	3	...	...	6
Measles.....	...		1	...	11	11

Typhoid Fever.—The cases of Enteric Fever were principally in Mid and North Reddish. In North Reddish two cases occurred in a house, the sole water supply of which was from a shallow well, the water of which was contaminated by surface drainage. Owing to the reports made, a supply of water was laid on to the property from the mains.

In two other cases—both in old houses—the privy pit was against the outer wall of the house, and moisture had percolated the wall. The yards also were imperfectly flagged. One other case was removed by my directions to the Stockport Isolation Hospital.

Scarlet Fever.—Six cases of a mild character occurred in North Reddish in October, November, and December. Other isolated cases were notified in Mid and South Reddish.

Diphtheria.—Six mild cases of Diphtheria were notified in Mid and North Reddish during the year.

Measles.—In April one death from Measles was certified in Mid Reddish. So far as I could ascertain it was the only case.

Twenty-two cases of Measles came under observation in North Reddish in May, June, and July.

All were of a mild character, and there were no deaths.

Diarrhœa.—This epidemic disease appeared in the latter part of August, was very prevalent in September and died out in October. There were 13 deaths—nine in Mid and four in South Reddish.

The ages at death were :—

Under six months	...	...	...	5
Six months and under twelve months	...	...	...	3
Over twelve months and under two years	...	...	...	3
Under five years	...	...	...	2

Influenza.—In February the disease was somewhat prevalent among children, and in April among adults. Four deaths were certified—three in South and one in Mid Reddish.

Isolation Hospital.—No provision has yet been made, but the importance of the matter has been recognised by the Council, and it is hoped that shortly a suitable permanent arrangement will be made, either with the adjoining borough (Stockport) or in combination with neighbouring districts.

Sanitary Work.—Mr. Ludlow, your Inspector of Nuisances, furnishes the following report of his work during the year :—

Number of Notices served, 49. The nuisances were remedied in all cases, and no legal action was required.

Plans approved for 114 houses.

„	„	1 new works.
„	„	1 warehouse.
„	„	3 additions to works.

ABATED NUISANCES.

Nuisances from Defective Drains 10 cases.

„	„	Stagnant Water, 1.
„	„	Defective Roof Gutter, 1.
„	„	Defective Boundary Wall, 1.
„	„	„ Ashpits and Closets, 85 houses.

Twenty-six houses were stoved after cases of Infectfous Disease.

Two samples of butter were taken and forwarded for analysis, and on examination were found pure.

Drains.—As much new property is being constructed in Reddish, I think it right to impress on the Council the necessity for a thorough inspection of all drains and their testing by some suitable test before the houses are allowed to be occupied. Facilities should also be provided for testing all doubtful drains in occupied houses where required.

Sanitary Accommodation.—The almost unanimous opinion of Sanitary experts at the present time is that Fresh Water Closets, out of doors, are the most healthy conveniences for all classes of property. A properly constructed Water Closet has been proved over and over again to be free from the main objections urged against it (liability to freeze and the like). The initial cost is very little, if any, greater, and the advantages it possesses over either waste water closet or any form of conservancy system (tins or tubs or privies) are very great indeed. Animal and vegetable refuse should, as far as possible, be burnt, and what is left placed in a small covered galvanised iron bin, which should be removed from the premises and emptied frequently.

Bake Houses.—There are 17 premises in which bread is baked for sale. All come under the designation of Retail Bake Houses. The majority of them possess ordinary ovens in connection with small shops. They are inspected regularly, and as a rule are cleanly and well kept.

Slaughter Houses.—Five premises are in regular use as Slaughter Houses. Many of them were built and used as such before the Bye-Laws in respect to such places were enforced. The licensing of these places should be strictly adhered to, and when the opportunity arises the license should be revoked in the case of premises not complying with the Bye-Laws. They have been inspected regularly.

Cow Sheds.—During the past year public attention has been very largely directed to the care of and housing of milk cows, and the dangers to the Public Health which may arise from the use of milk from tuberculous cows. There are 23 cowsheds, and upwards of 200 milk cows are kept in the district, and the Council, recognising its responsibility in the matter, is enforcing the regulations which were adopted in 1885. A careful inspection of all premises is being made, and all defects of air space, lighting, ventilation, and cleanliness

are brought to the notice of the owners, who are required to remedy them. At the same time the source and condition of the drinking water supplied to cattle is being attended to. The work is necessarily slow, as defects which have previously been sanctioned by long continued custom are not easily remedied.

Factories and Workshops.—As a consequence of the inspections made and the reports resulting therefrom, the sanitary provision in one large factory has been entirely remodelled and brought up to date. These premises are regularly inspected.

Dense Smoke.—In December the Council adopted a time limit of ten minutes in any one hour for the emission of dense smoke from the chimney of any factory or workshop. Copies of the resolution passed have been printed and circulated throughout the district.

In conclusion, I would briefly indicate what appears to me to be the lines on which Sanitary Work, calculated to advance the social condition and improve the general health of the population, should be directed in the future. Situated as Reddish is, near to Manchester and Stockport, and possessing many advantages for the erection of works or dwellings, there is every indication that new property (chiefly of the weekly tenant class) will before long be rapidly put up. A systematic supervision of all building operations, to see that the work is carried out in accordance with the Bye-Laws, should be maintained; the construction of fresh water closets enjoined where possible, and all drains tested previous to being passed. The reservation of land of open spaces may also require consideration.

Much has been done in recent years to improve the main thoroughfares, and much still remains to be done with regard to the proper paving of back yards and enclosed ground in the vicinity of houses.

The education of the people that they may appreciate the advantages of "home sanitation" is one of the problems of the future. Much may be done by home visits undertaken by suitably trained ladies—either as inspectors or nurses. Popular lectures might also do good.

The South Ward has lately benefited largely by the services of a District Nurse, brought there by the kindness of a lady resident. I trust that means may be found for installing a second nurse in the North Ward.

Thanking you most sincerely for the consideration you have always extended to me in the exercise of my duties as Medical Officer of Health.

I am, gentlemen,

Yours respectfully,

T. HANSON SMITH, D.P.H. (Camb.).

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

February 25th, 1899.

